

NOT COLD UNWANTED — BUT NOT MINE!

Number 23.

ALBION

November 1st 1970

ALBION is a journal of board wargaming. It is published on the first of every month at a subscription price of 2/- per issue, plus postage. Postal Diplomacy games are reported in COURIER, which is the section of ALBION, mailed separately, created for that purpose.

Applications for places in Diplomacy games should be made to the editor - Don Turnbull, 6 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire, England. The supply of games is a function of demand.

ALBION is a member of the NFTF Games Bureau Diplomacy Division.

Diplomacy is a game manufactured and marketed by Games Research Inc., 48 Wareham Street, Boston, Mass. 02118, U.S.A.

Contributions of articles to ALBION are welcomed; they should be typed or written legibly, and submitted as far in advance of the next publication date as possible. Such material may be either games-orientated (wargames and non-wargames alike), and/or should be satirical in nature.

Contents.

Game Report - Tactical Game 14. Part I.	Page 2.
Malcolm Watson. Don Turnbull.	
Game Report - Anzio Beachhead.	Page 5.
Malcolm Watson. Don Turnbull.	
Diplomacy Rule Interpretations - Unordered Units etc.	Page 7.
John McCallum (part).	
Letters to the Editor (Bob Stuart, BLUG, Ray Evans, Fred Davis, Rod Walker, Eric Slack, Michael Nethercot)	Page 10.
Extracts from Questionnaires	Page 16.
Another English Diplomacy magazine!	Page 16.
A British Idiot in America Part iii	Page 17.
Don Turnbull.	
Revisions to Trades/Subscriber List	Page 21.
ALBION 69/1 Supply Centre Chart	Page 22.
A Grand Revelation concerning Malcolm Watson	Page 22.

The AHIKS British Region Members' Bulletin for November is attached to this issue.

The front cover is by R. Emerson. I think George Forster will be producing a cartoon for the rear. To both these people, our thanks.

Editorial.

I would like to announce a slight change in policy this time. In future, instead of announcing a new game, then waiting for players, I will keep a list of those who wish to enter a new game, when one is available. When this list contains seven names - we will start a new game. So send your name to me if you want to sign up.

At present the list contains:- Dennis Nixon, David Karfoot, Peter Robertson.
Edi Birsan (international games only).

This seems a more sensible policy than before - let's see how it works.
Now on to your reading.

ALBION Game Review Number 10A.

TACTICAL GAME 14.

Part I.

We will have to deviate from the normal reviewing procedure this month. We had intended to review two games this issue, firstly because there are a lot of new games on which we have not yet reported, and secondly because the subject of the other review, ANZIO BEACHHEAD, is a 'mini-game', and does not perhaps require as long a report as usual. You will find the report on the latter later in this issue, headed Review Number 11.

We therefore set to work, and soon got enough experience of ANZIO BEACHHEAD to write the report you will read later. However, when we settled down to TAC14, we decided that we just could not do this game justice without playing many more test games than we are normally accustomed to play when compiling a report. Tactical Game 14 is a composite game - there are many variations in the composition of forces taking part in actions which themselves span a period of 400 years. There are therefore quite a few special rules which deal with the capabilities of individual units, and we were obliged to consider a number of game scenarios in order to get a realistic view of the whole scope of the game. We started with the simplest line-up and progressed towards the most complex.

The report will therefore be in two parts; the first will deal with earlier combat situations - the use of cavalry, pikemen, swordsmen and crossbowmen etc.: the second will cover artillery, trenches, arquebusiers, the castle etc. This means that the many optional rules, also, will fall, by and large, into two categories - those applying to the earlier engagements only, and those applying to all periods. In this respect, part A contains reference to the Feudal Rule, commander rules, panic (but not ferocity), treachery, caltrops (but not trenches) and weather. The gaps will be filled in the second part - with the rules about trenches, the castle, ferocity, dismounting of cavalry, honours of war, improved arquebus, etc.

Right. Having explained that, on to the report proper.

Publisher. Published by Poultron Press as part of the contents of Strategy and Tactics magazine, issue 22 (July-August 1970).

Price. The magazine, of which the game is only a small part, costs \$2.50 plus postage.

Background.

The issue of S&T containing this game also contains an article entitled 'The Renaissance of Infantry', which is also the sub-title of the game itself. The article, written by Al Nofi, goes a long way towards explaining the purpose of the game, the historical factors involved etc. However it is almost impossible to sum up the article in a few brief words since, as explained above, the game covers a considerable period of history. We suppose it can be summed up as 'a recreation of the organisation, tactics etc. of Medieval fighting units', and be prepared to accept this as a wild over-simplification.

Presentation.

A playing map is supplied with the magazine. This should be mounted on a suitable rigid surface (ply in our case) and preferably coloured and then covered with a protective, transparent, surface. Clear Fablon was used in our case. Before covering, colour the map with felt pens and put on the grid system for postal play with Letraset.

Unit counters are supplied in a sheet. These should be mounted on card of a suitable thickness, then cut out with a sharp knife, using a metal straight-edge. The counters can be protected by spraying with clear lacquer, if desired. It is no exaggeration to say that this map sheet, and these unit counters, are far and away the best artistic creations of their type that we have ever seen. Red Simonsen, who designed both map and units, is to be congratulated on his magnificent effort. Suitably coloured, the map is a delight to behold, and the detail is superb. For instance, woods are not merely represented by splash contours, as is often the case - here we have foliage; bridges are not merely representations, but are drawn in perspective, in keeping with the period in style. You can almost smell the fine old English air, suitably laced with dung from the fields.

We make no apology for waxing enthusiastic on this aspect. It is a really fine piece of work. Even if you never play the game, you must colour and mount the map in a prominent place on the wall - it will provide an interesting talking-point if nothing else.

The rules.

These are printed on a sheet which is supplied, loose, with the magazine. Al Nofi, the designer, has taken care to present the rules in a logical form, with the result that they are clear and easy to follow. There are many optional rules, suitable mixtures of which can be incorporated into any version of the game.

The edge of the mapboard summarises, in tabular form, terrain effects, combat unit capabilities and the combat results table, plus a point scale to keep track of points lost by each side. As we said in our report on 1918, we very much like the idea of presenting this sort of information on the playing surface itself - it allows the game to proceed at a healthy rate without continual searching through the rules.

Actually, when you get into them, the rules are quite complicated - perhaps it is merely the fact that there are a lot of them. This is one of those games which you cannot hope to learn by just reading the rules - you must play the game, in different scenarios, a number of times, preferably face-to-face. However this is not a criticism of the rules themselves - we found them very realistic. Malcolm, who before his 'conversion' was a keen table-top player, commented that these rules carried out very well the transition from table-top to board gaming, since the game is, in reality, a table-top game designed for board play. And if that sounds Irish, blame Malcolm.

There are so many interesting rules that it would be impossible to deal with them all individually. Just to pick out a few - units may fight either in melee or, in the case of those with 'range' weapons, by firing from non-adjacent squares. Defending units which have 'range' weapons may use these to defend themselves, in addition to their melee capabilities.

Cavalry must charge a certain distance in a straight line before they can melee. Engaged cavalry must disengage, run back, turn and charge again if they wish to attack a second time. In so doing, they might get caught in caltrops, which are special anti-cavalry defensive features.

Pikemen can form defensive squares, which affords them better protection from attack.

Command units are really morale-boosters, and modify the fighting capabilities of units nearby. They help to rally demoralised units, and allow them to face the enemy instead of running like hell off the board whenever the enemy hoves in view.

Using the Feudal Rule, heavy cavalry are forced to charge direct at the enemy whenever possible, even if they would be attacking at poor odds in so doing. In some cases, they even trample to death friendly foot troops in their way! This rule reflects the 'rash impulsively heroic' manner of medieval knights, and is a new and interesting type of rule for board games. In the right conditions, of course, the charge succeeds. However, given a strong defence, prepared for the expected charge, the rule can lead to mass extermination of heavy cavalry - which is a pretty accurate reflection, when all said and done. This is a very interesting new rule.

There are a number of morale rules, most concerning the use of the command units. An essential feature, if ever there was one, of a game which examines warfare in the Middle Ages.

Finally, the weather is taken into account - mud can slow down your cavalry, fog can reduce the range of your weapons, heavy rain can make pikemen feel thoroughly cheezed off and ready for home.

A truly magnificent array of rules, and one which should gladden the heart of any wargamer, interested in that period of warfare or not.

The Play.

Fast, furious and bloody. The game contains a total of 20 battle scenarios, each with different compositions of forces, different rules, different victory conditions etc. This section of the report deals only with the earlier scenarios from Adrianople (378) to Agincourt (1415). You may realise that this period includes the battles between the magnificent English and the dastardly Scots, fought with great verve by the Anglo/Scots test panel. One day I will tell you whether we managed to saw Scotland off and tow it to Norway.

We have already dealt with the capabilities of some individual units; however we must mention, at this point, the effects of terrain on combat, and the fighting capabilities of different units in different situations.

This aspect is complicated, to say the least. Terrain affects different units in different ways, and constant reference to the charts is necessary, particularly in the early stages. All units have a 'facing' - a field of fire or offensive combat. Units attacked in the front defend strongly, but their defensive capability is reduced by an attack in the rear or on the flank. Crossing a river is a hazardous business, and if you get caught with units half-way across a river you might sigh and weep a bitter tear, but you had better send for the reinforcements right away. 'Range weapons' can shoot further from a hilltop, when they also gain from the fact that enemy cavalry has a job charging at them effectively.

Etc. Etc. - there are just too many factors for us to mention them all.

Unclear situations, rules etc.

So far, we haven't found any. The rules are quite clear.

Summary.

We perhaps haven't seen enough of the game yet to come to any positive conclusions. However, from what we have seen so far, this is a most exciting and interesting game, and one which you should lose no time in getting and playing. Obviously we can't make our recommendations until we have finished the play-testing. But if we give this game anything but 'highly recommended', we will verily be surprised. Order it now - you won't be disappointed.

Suitability for Postal Play.

Units are individually identified, so no problem in that respect. Since the game is close, in nature, to a table-top game, postal play will clearly be less viable than face-to-face play, assuming equal opportunity. To account for the cavalry charges, morale etc. might be quite a complex procedure by post.

However we see nothing that would rule the game out completely for postal play, and consider that the apparent merits of the game will more than outweigh any inconvenience of playing through the mail.

You will need a grid system as follows:-

Letters A-EE along the north edge, starting in the west.

Numbers 1-37 diagonally running from south-west to north-east, starting in the north-west.

Checks: Villages are at F12 and U22. Bridges are G13,J22,T19 and AA28.

There is a damsel in distress tied to a tree in S21. If, drunk, you take the wrong road late at night, you will fall into the marsh at M27.

Malcolm Watson. Don Turnbull.

ALBION Game Review Number 11.

ANZIO BEACHHEAD.

Publisher: published by Poultron Press as part of the contents of Strategy and Tactics magazine issue 20 (March-April 1970).

Price: the magazine, of which this is only a small part, sells for \$2.50 plus postage.

Background.

Dave Williams, the designer of this game, also designed the Avalon Hill game ANZIO about 18 months ago. The title AH bestowed on their game is something of a misnomer, since the game covers the entire Italian campaign, and no invasion need be made at Anzio at all. The game that should have been called ANZIO is the one we are reviewing here; however AH clearly thought that their title was a better seller than 'Mussolini' (for example), and hence Dave had to call this game ANZIO BEACHHEAD to make the distinction.

As the name suggests, therefore, this is a tactical game of the actual invasion at Anzio. The terrain covered by the map only extends from the beaches in the south-west to Campoleone station in the north and Cori in the east, to give you an idea of the scale.

No attempt has been made, to my knowledge, to make this game an optional adjunct of the AH ANZIO. However it will be interesting, in time, to compare this pair of games with the Test Series Game 'Italy', shortly to be reviewed in these pages, since the designer of the latter, Jim Dunnigan, has combined strategic and tactical elements in the same game, using two mapboards.

Presentation.

The playing map and unit counter sheet are supplied with the magazine, as in the case of TAC14. The same recommendations hold for mounting the map, cutting the counters etc.

The map was obviously drawn by Red Simonsen; perhaps the detail isn't quite so complete as for TAC14, but a nice job, nevertheless.

The rules.

These are in the magazine proper, and are complete and well-written. We didn't come across any snags at all.

The really novel feature of the rulee concerns the impulse system of movement. Many of the Test Series Games we have reviewed have a four-impulse system per turn, each player having two 'moves', with an attack in between, before the opponent can etart his part of the turn.

However this game has no less than six impulses per turn, and these alternate between players. Thus impulse 1, 3 and 5 are Allied movement impulses, the others German. Each impulse is made under different conditions of movement rate, whether an attack can result, etc.

We found the sytem very workable and realistic. It seems to duplicate well the 'attack, gain ground, reform, prepare for counter-attack' of actual action. Aside from this, there is nothing else really new in the rules, which can be digested in one sitting.

The Play.

The game is only 7 turns (42 impulses) long, and hence qualifies, on these as well as physical grounds, as a mini-game. This means, in turn, that players can get through two games in one evening, depending on the number of breaks taken to refresh, or relieve, the inner man. There is a lot to be said for a good, brief game at the moment, with many games taking 6+ hours to complete. And it is an enjoyable little game to play. The balance is good (i.e. we expect the Allies to win slightly more often than the Germans - but the Allies chose where and when to invade anyway). Perhaps a points system would make the victory conditions more flexible; however this wouldn't be hard to work out for anyone interested.

Objectives are clear-cut, so long pauses for thought are rarely required. Once the invasion turn is over, the game proceeds at a good rate.

Conclusions.

An interesting and entertaining game - very suitable for face-to-face players with limited time at their disposal. We think most people will enjoy it, and recommend it.

Suitability for Postal Play.

The six-impulse system might mean that some letters, in a postal game, will merely list the amended positions of a handful of units; however this seems a minor disadvantage.

In all other respects, the game is quite suitable for postal play, and might make an interesting 'second game' between two players who already have a full-scale game under way. The Naval Gunfire Support and Allied Air Superiority rules strictly require a monitor to operate them, but sealed orders, plus a certain amount of trust, should overcome the problem amicably.

Units need identifying; a list of unit identifications is given in the rules. The grid system we laid out is as follows:-

Letters A-Y down the north edge. Numbers 1-24 along the east edge and up the south edge, starting in the north-east.

Checks: Cori is Y2. Cisterna is T8. Campoleone is I10. Anzio is H24. Conca is Q15.

Diplomacy Rulings / Interpretations.

THE RETREATING OF UNORDERED UNITS ETC.

This article deals with three main questions:-

1. A player sends in orders for a certain season; when the report appears, one of his units is dislodged. Can he, instead of specifying a retreat for the unit, remove it, perhaps thereby gaining a build at home?
2. A player sends in orders for a certain season; when the report appears, one of his units is dislodged. What happens if he fails to submit a retreat order?
3. A player fails to send in orders for his units; one of them is dislodged by an attack. Is that unit removed from the board, or does the gamesmaster request a retreat order as normal, assuming that the failure to send in the orders was a temporary lapse?

These three questions are very much alike, it seems to me; two of them occur only in postal games, generally speaking, and hence we cannot expect a ruling from the game rulebook.

The first question appeared in these pages in a letter from Charles Wells (issue 19). We learnt that some American gamesmasters allow this to happen, others do not. The real problem arises when a gamesmaster who does not allow this removal asks a player to submit a retreat order, only to find that none is sent in for the next report. Some gamesmasters then remove the unit in question, others invent rules to specify where the retreat should be made if the player himself doesn't order it. Obviously, if only one location is available for a retreat, the gamesmaster retreats the unit there, and this can be reported in the same report as that in which the unit was dislodged.

You can see that we have already introduced the second of the questions above. Any ruling which deals with question 1 is certain to influence the answer to question two also.

Neither of the first two situations has ever arisen in an ALBION game to date; however it would be wise to stipulate what would happen if the matter arose. It seems to me that the first question has a clear answer - No! We cannot in all reason justify a procedure whereby a player could remove a unit far from home, instead of retreating it, and then build a fresh unit in the home country. What this would amount to is a very rapid retreat, perhaps over a very great distance. The game would suddenly take on certain aspects of a Hyperspace variant, wherein movement between non-adjacent provinces was allowed.

This virtually dictates the answer to question two - if a retreat isn't specified by the player, the gamesmaster should under no circumstances remove the unit in question, since this could, once again, amount to a long, fast retreat. Some method has to be devised by the gamesmaster to stipulate the retreat route.

ALBION has a system for priority of removal of units, when no removal order is received from the player concerned, but no similar ruling for the retreating of units. Just in case the situation arises, we had better have one. And who better to emulate, in forming such a rule, than John McCallum, who discusses this matter at length in SerenDip 49? John says:-

'Correspondents have sometimes suggested that the gamesmaster can just make the retreat that appears to him most advantageous to the retreating player. I think this is abominable: the retreat he orders will inevitably more or less hinder some other player and more or less help still another, i.e. the gamesmaster is taking sides in a game which he is refereeing. The rule to be used cannot be left until the event; it must be pre-determined and known to player and gamesmaster alike.'

'At the time when I first made this proposal Eric Just had just entered organised postal Diplomacy. There was a good deal of discussion of his Right Hand Rule. He used that rule, as Wells states, in a much more general way, but his rule did give a definite order for retreats, so that is what I suggested should be used. Today, I am not so sure. Just's rule is a retreat forward. Diplomacy players are aware of the advantages of the forward retreat: many an unwary Russian player has been surprised on using Swedish and Finnish units to dislodge an army in Norway when the latter would then "retreat" to St. Petersburg. But we are here trying to establish a general rule, and it might be an idea to give the "realists" a word. Very frequently a retreating army will fall back along its previous line of advance. There are two reasons. First, the practical one: the line of advance will often become the established line of communications. Reinforcements and drafts move up it, depots of stores and ammunition are along it. By retreating along it the army gathers strength as it goes, incorporating fresh troops and picking up rations and ammunition. The second reason is psychological and probably stronger. A retreating army, especially one without orders, the case we are dealing with, is always more or less demoralised. The troops know one thing for certain - they want to go home. The road that brought them to their present location is the one they know; left to their own devices it is the one they will take back. How strong this tendency is can be seen in the retreat of Napoleon's army from Moscow. The practical reason did not there apply - there were no stores of food, fodder, or ammunition along the route. The road Moscow to Smolensk was probably the worst they could have chosen since it meant retreating through a countryside which they themselves had pillaged on their advance. Yet it is the route they took, back along the way they had come.

'I would therefore like to propose the "Retreat from Moscow version of the McCallum Retreat Rule". If the retreat has to be ordered by the gamesmaster, he first tries the space from which the unit involved entered its present space; if that is impossible the space next to the left, then next to the right, then two to the left, then two to the right, and so on.

'To illustrate, suppose a German army enters Galicia from Silesia and sometime later is dislodged and must retreat. If the player fails to designate his retreat, the gamesmaster makes it using the following priorities: Silesia, Bohemia, Warsaw, Vienna, Ukraine, Budapest, Rumania. The first of these to which it may legally retreat is the one to which it is ordered. If it entered its present position by convoy the body of water through which it was convoyed, necessarily precluded, is examined first, and rejected, then first to the left of that body of water, then first to the right, and so on. This is almost exactly the reverse of the Just Right Hand Rule but is closer to historical reality.'

Well, John, I am inclined to agree with you on all but one of your points. It seems to me that the above is a nice balance of the realism argument and the abstraction we have come to accept from the game as designed. On one point only I must quibble - the question of the rather arbitrary left-right-left-right rulings. It seems to me that, if the line of advance is not available for a retreat, the retreating army will attempt to make a beeline for home and the fireside comforts. Thus, if the space whence the unit came is not available for retreat, I would tend to determine which adjacent space to use by working out which was closer to the home country; if both are equally close, then the arbitrary left-right ruling can be incorporated. Thus, in your example, I would still use the order of priority to specify, but for slightly different reasons. Bohemia would rank above Warsaw since it is nearer home.

Readers might say that, in such a situation, priority should be given to supply centres when considering the retreat. I don't believe this is the case. As John remarks, a retreating army is demoralised and, having no orders, isn't likely to consider offensive action (which is implicit in the occupation of a supply centre, even when vacant) while in full flight. I suppose a case could be made for giving priority to a friendly supply centre; however, since I don't expect to have to invoke the rule in ALBION anyway, this is academic, and we will stick to John's ruling, with my slight amendment, should such a case ever arise.

Which brings us to question 3 - a slightly different matter, but one involving similar principles. In this case we are forced to consider the question of just how temporary is a player's absence from the game. A player may miss a move for a variety of reasons - he could be fed up with the game (perhaps he is losing and isn't concerned about the ultimate result). On the other hand, he could have been called away, unexpectedly, to attend his grandmother's wedding, or something. He could even have sent orders in, and been caught by that well-known British institution the Post Office Lost Letter Service.

It strikes me that we cannot, from the gamesmaster's point of view, hope to distinguish between these possibilities, if information is lacking. Hence any rule we formulate must not contain any proviso as to the cause of the missed move. After all, Diplomacy is only a game - strict penalties imposed on those players who miss a move every so often aren't really apposite; the player suffers a penalty already by virtue of the fact that his units can make no gain. I propose, therefore, to treat all lapses in sending orders as temporary, and not form a special rule for someone who has obviously dropped out of the game entirely. Thus, if unordered units are dislodged, they are retreated in line with the above rulings, not removed out of hand.

Summing up, then.

1. No. Units which are dislodged must be retreated if possible, whether or not a retreat order is submitted. The only way in which they can be removed is by dislodging them in circumstances in which they cannot retreat anywhere. Or, of course, if in retreating they lose the last supply centre in an Autumn move.
2. If a player fails to submit a retreat order, the McCallum rule, in its amended version as above, will be used to determine the space to which the unit is retreated.
3. The gamesmaster requests a retreat order as usual; the unit is not removed. If no retreat order is sent in, the situation reverts to 2 above.

I would like to thank John for his permission to reprint from SerenDip, and for the suggestions above. Readers may be interested to know that, now John's LAURANIA has disappeared from the Diplomacy scene, SerenDip often contains interesting and informative articles and letters on Diplomacy rulings. We have come to expect well-reasoned articles from John, who is one of the most experienced postal Diplomacy players and gamesmasters, and SerenDip certainly lives up to expectations.

Don Turnbull.

We now come to our letter column, which is much larger than usual this issue.

We have accumulated a attack of interesting, often amusing, lettera this time, and make no apology for the fact that they take up more space than usual. At one time, I thought we were going to have an issue totally composed of letters; however suitable red-pencilling has pared down the quantity. Apologies to those whose letters are therefore not reprinted in full.

From Bob Stuart, 3 Millwood Road, Orpington, Kent.

Dear Don,

Sh! SSHH!! Don't tell anyone, but I believe I have found a hotbed, den, or whatever you like to call it, of Diplomacy.

Brenda, my wife, has a colleague whose husband plays with his friends. Got something wrong there - plays Diplomacy, I mean.

This information received, required instant action. I decided that some means should be used to trap these unwary face-to-face players, so that they might become true addicts.

The trap was baited. Two copies of ALBION were carried with great care by Brenda to her school, to be given to the husband. A letter in my beat handwriting - without spelling errors (checked personally by my children) - was also despatched.

This diabolical trap worked - it is understood the poor unfortunate husband burned the midnight oil and candlea from both ends, in order to read the copies of ALBION and return them the next day. Hungry for more, supplies were of course, and unnaturally, cut off.

The chief addict, Peter Robertson, is now in a desperate state. He and his friends have been invited to partake of refreshments at my house on Sunday.

It is hoped that the eight of Diplomacy, a liberal quantity of ALBION magazines, Avalon Hill games, and the knives in their backs may well produce a whole crop of future ALBION addicts.

Cheers, Bob.

A week later I had another gleeful letter from Bob. djt

Dear Don,

For the last week or so I have been at the Old Bailey (on trial? no!). On Jury Service - not the McKay trial, but on a complicated case of rape.

*Didn't know rape was that complicated, personally. I thought you just
and and then Trust Bob Stuart to get that sort of Jury

Service - all I manage are motoring offences and dog licences. djt*

Having penetrated the ~~fife~~ war ring operated by Pete Robertson and forced Pete to come to my house, where he was fed beer and beer, I carefully introduced the topic of Diplomacy. His eyes suitably glazed, he expressed interest in postal play; liberal copies of ALBION and plenty of smoke broke him down. Several Amherst Hill games were displayed, and these caught his fancy.

Avalon Hill games were displayed, and these caught his fancy. He wants to play postal Diplomacy and is keen to obtain AH games - Stalingrad interested him most. He would be delighted to hear from you. His address is:

Peter Robertson,

This isn't an error, folks. Carried away in the heat of the moment, Bob forgot to put in the address. Which means that Pete Robertson hasn't heard from me yet. However he will get this copy of ALBION soon. Bob Stuart might, at that point, have some explaining to do..... djt
Some crank has written you a letter which I enclose.

Cheera, Bob.

Bob enclosed another letter, which deserves space. djt
From BLUG, c/o 3 Millwood Road, Orpington, Kent.

Dear Mr. Turnbull,

Many of those involved with Diplomacy and AHIKS have received ALBION. Already you have had letters of praise and, from the letters printed, it would appear that ALBION has won 'hearts and minds'.

Some have not written, and not stated their inner thoughts - maybe they were waiting for COURIER, waiting to see the two mags so that they could give a fair appraisal.

In my household the whole family looked forward to the old ALBION. Daughter enjoying Christopher in America, wife enjoying a quiet commiseration with other wargame widows' suffering, son enjoying the reviews. Dad had a happy, contented look as he wrapped himself up for the evening, completely entertained with war and rumours of war.

Now Dad's a funny sort of bloke - he used to start at the back of the old mag. and work his way to the front. He always does things backwards.

When the new ALBION came he was a little disconcerted - those things normally in the back of the mag. were missing, and he was a little disturbed, though pleased with the rest of the contents. No doubt he would be completely happy when COURIER arrived.

Next day COURIER bounced through the letter-box.

Poor Dad. He could hardly believe his eyes. On close study he noted he had copy no. 22A. Where was 22B? Where were the reports on the other games? You see, Dad liked playing other people's battles as much as his own. He loved playing with other people's units. Using brains other than his own. Checking on how the best players do it.

Dad's very cross. Please, please can we have all the games, and all the press reports? It will make Dad happy.

Yours frustrated, BLUG.

P.S. BLUG is the world-famous loser - the only player ever to lose 18 Me109s to a Gladiator in Battle of Britain, and to send off his Afrika Korps order-of-battle sheet without putting any moves on it at all.

BLUG has forgotten, of course, that COURIER 22A contained only 1969CF, since 1970AK runs on long deadlines and 1970AY is only just on the point of starting. COURIER 22B, which contained reports on all three games, was published a few days ago. djt

From Ray Evans, 12 Mareth Road, Bedford, Beds.

Dear Don,

I like the new name of the new mag. as well as the way it has been printed; it's got that more sober look than that certain other mag.

I can't help thinking, though, that you have perhaps wasted 5d. by sending the single sheet, when it could have been backed on to the ALBION. However I realise that it is early days as yet, and to criticise at this stage would perhaps be a little bit unfair.

Regards, Ray.

Ray is quite right, of course. ALBION 22 was a bit late in getting to the mail, and an issue of COURIER was mailed a day or so later. When the two publication dates coincide, at least within a couple of days or so, the two will be mailed together. However this will be the exception rather than the rule. djt

From Fred Davis, Goeppingen, Germany.

Dear Don,

Once again I want to say thank you to you and to Margaret for entertaining us in Manchester. I'm not sure whether we told you that our flight from Manchester to London was delayed by 1½ hours due to the post-hijacking operational difficulties. They finally took just the 70 people who had to make connections with other aircraft in London there in a smaller plane, while everybody else was sent to London in a coach. Fortunately, we still had an hour to spare before our flight to Bremen when we arrived at London airport.

I have been negligent in responding to your questionnaire in ALBION 21 due to a great deal of travel. The magazine arrived here about the 18th of September. On the 20th I left on a 12-day trip to the Soviet Union and West Berlin. Having been advised not to bring any books or papers containing any political material along with me, I decided it would not be wise to bring that imperialist warmongering journal ALBION to Russia. I even left my diary behind in Germany for fear of confiscation. Then, ironically, the Russian customs never even asked me to open my suitcase.

I finally got home again yesterday, and had the chance to fully read ALBION and to complete your questionnaire. I suppose the next issue of ALBION is on its way to the States by now. I'll be back in Baltimore on October 19th, so please keep them coming.

I had a letter from Rod Walker telling me that a further version of "Aberration/ Abstraction" is going to appear in Strategy and Tactics in the near future. Perhaps you're already aware of this. I'm somewhat out of things at the moment. Rod asked me to 'type up about a 1,000 word article' on this for S&T. In my present situation, all I could do was roll around the floor laughing hysterically. Either he has already written said article, or I'll have to write it after Oct. 19th.

There are only two significant differences between the version printed in ALBION and the version Rod wants to print in S&T. One, which I fully agree with, is to make the Straits of Gibraltar passable to armies between Morocco and Andalusia without need of convoy, similar to the rule between Naples and Sicily (and Sweden to Denmark in the original rules). This makes Morocco, which is a supply centre, more vulnerable, instead of being in a protected corner.

Rod's second proposal is to make Switzerland passable but defended in place by a Swiss army. This part I accepted. However, I wrote to him that I did not agree with his idea that a victorious army capturing Switzerland is itself destroyed in the process of taking the space. How, I asked, can Switzerland be captured when there is no existing unit to occupy it? I gave an alternate suggestion, borrowed from "1863" in which the army capturing Switzerland is declared a 'disabled army' which, on the following turn, can neither move, be supported, or defend in place. That is, if it is attacked, it will have to retreat. If it survives one turn in Switzerland it regains its normal fighting capacity.

I don't know whether Rod will accept my suggestion. Hopefully there will be a letter from him waiting for me at home. In any event, Rod has done an excellent job on the rules. All of the optional rules, such as double moves for fleets etc. are clearly spelled out as options, to be voted in or out by the players. Please let me know whether the ABSTRACTION game in ALBION ever found a 7th player. If not, and if my game 1969B in THE VOICE is dead, as it appeared to be when I left home in August, I'll take the 7th shot myself.

In any case, I would most sincerely like you to consider adding the one rule change, permitting armies to move Morocco-Andalusia without convoy, before

ALBION 23 Page 13.

starting your game of ABSTRACTION. Even if there is to be no such game run in ALBION, I would appreciate your adding a one-paragraph addenda to the rules for the benefit of any buffs who may have saved the original rules for their files.

Sorry to have gone on for so long. Let's hope that we can get together again on one side of the Atlantic or the other for a more extended visit.
Your friend, Fred.

*The ABSTRACTION variant, invented by Fred Davis, appeared in ALBION 11 - an issue which, unfortunately, is now out of print. We soon got five interested players, but never rose to 7, so the idea of running the game had to be abandoned temporarily.

With more subscribers nowadays, it may be that we could run the game now. If anyone is interested in putting their names down for an ABSTRACTION game in ALBION, please let me know. No doubt arrangements could be made to duplicate a new set of rules, with the amendments Fred gives above, if anyone hasn't got access to them at present.

Fred and Inge spent 24 hours with us in Timperley en route between Newcastle and Germany in September. Not only did he eat the Turnbull food and see the magnificent ALBION Publishing Corporation Offices, but he had the traumatic experience of meeting Malcolm Watson, a fact which, itself, will make his visit one he will never forget in a hurry. We were sorry they could not stay longer, but there will be another time, no doubt. djt*

From Rod Walker, 5058 Hawley Boulevard, San Diego, California 92116.

Dear Don,

ALBION 22 here today (no COURIER which, I gather, has not appeared yet), and was excellent, as usual. Thought I would get some comments off before I'm not able to write at all.

Margins. Most collectors use ring binders, I think. I do, and Hal Naus does, and I believe Don Miller does. And, of course, others. In ALBION, the left-hand (right-hand on even-numbered pages) has been very wide - which has a good appearance but is non-functional. In addition, the right-hand (left-hand on even-numbered pages) could be moved $\frac{1}{4}$ " or so towards the edge with no difficulty.

Hmmmm NOW REVERSE ALL REFERENCES TO RIGHT AND LEFT ABOVE THAT'S HOW WE GOT TO DRIVING ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD IN THE FIRST PLACE. In fact, $\frac{1}{2}$ " would not be too much. All you really need do is leave adequate space for the holes.

Re: my last letter, which you published. As a postscript, I might add that I would not have allowed Robertson to retreat his units, but would have annihilated them under the rule that when a player leaves a game (even though in this case it was temporary), any of his units which are dislodged are removed from the board. The practice in this regard has always varied in the States; many GMs would rule as you did, that the units could still retreat. This under the interpretation that 'left the game' means permanently.

With respect to one country ordering another country's units, I think your arrangement is probably the best. I don't know that there is anything wrong in such a practice. Such guidance as the Rulebook provides seems to indicate that a player must order his own units; however, that guidance does not appear to be conclusive.

The practice is, however, superfluous. In this instance which provoked this discussion, the Italian player has merely to write to the Russian player and

request, "please order your F Bla to Arm." And the Russian player submits the order. Why go through all this folderol of who orders what when the issue can be resolved through normal diplomatic channels provided by the game?

Best, Rod.

*I agree that this is the better solution. However, there appears to be no reason why the opportunity to transfer command should not be available to players, if they wish to make use of it. There may be good reasons for one player to take a unit under his control, rather than relying on the ally to supply the orders each time. Of course, the orders of the 'parent' country are always obeyed in the case of conflicting orders.

A few weeks ago, I wanted to send a short message to Eric Slack, but found that I had used all my plain postcards. I therefore sent him a postcard which was, strictly speaking, the property of Altrincham Garrick Society, a local amateur theatre with which I had been involved before getting the wargaming bug. The card was a pre-printed request to appear for rehearsal, or something, and I had totypewriter between the printed lines, which made it all the more difficult for Eric to read what I had typed. Anyway, he spotted the theatrical context and wrote me the following reply. djt*

Dear Don,

Got your elaborate card and fought my way to the end. The card of course is a dead give-away. You are a Secret Thespian and I have visions of you having them rolling in the aisles. This, of course, provokes the thought that it would be a nice apt touch if, when regaling us with your welcoming speech at the end of the month *the AHKS British Region Meeting in November djt* you round the thing off with a snappy rendering of a few stanzas of Henry's speech before Harfleur. (Henry the Fifth, not Radice). Thus giving the proceedings an appropriately martial send-off which, after all, would be eminently suitable for a get-together of the world's leading wargaming society. Brood on it.... Have read your glowing account of S&T issue 22, and a fine gloom-inducing thing it is. I keep seeing the postman drift past, and feel like Peri at the gates of Paradise. What is happening at Poultron Press? Dunnigan, art thou sleeping there below??

Incidentally, when I have got issue 22 I shall of course be subscribing for a further three issues. So don't cross me off any lists. Advise me of charge for same when you know it. Always providing I can work the combination lock on my wife's purse, or successfully rifle the dog's veterinary box, or persuade my bank manager that I'm not such a bad risk really, I shall pay up like an Englishman and a gentleman.

Meanwhile, back to the treadmill and those wistful dreams wherein Poultron Press send things by return of post. And after all, who knows? Perhaps tomorrow. Cheers, Eric.

Some readers may not know that I am meant to be an agent, in the UK, for the Poultron Press products - Strategy and Tactics magazine, the Test Series Games etc. However other readers who are aware of this fact are also uncomfortably aware that the orders they are placing with me are not renowned for their speed of delivery. In fact, I haven't heard from Jim Dunnigan or any of his cohorts for some time, and the large order of games, magazines etc. I sent over some time ago has not arrived. I should take this opportunity of assuring everyone that I will do my best to get things moving, and haven't spent all their cash on beer. Yet. djt

From Michael Nethercot, 20 Moray Close, Rise Park, Romford, Essex.

Dear Don,

As is usual with all new British-built cars, mine has started to fall to pieces. To date we have lost the small bonnet plate which flew off when we were doing 70 along the Brentwood by-pass, hitting the windscreen and thence landing under the wheels of an oncoming Container transporter heading towards Chelmsford on the down lane.

Having recovered from this incident we pulled into our usual garage to fill up with petrol. I like to check the oil, battery, water etc., so I pull the bonnet release lever under the dash. Nothing happens. It appears that the release catch has broken.

It takes the entire afternoon, using all the available mechanical resources to discover that the water is OK in the radiator, we need $\frac{1}{2}$ a pint of oil, and that the battery is doing its job.

Fine, but on our way to work the next morning we are more than shocked to hear the most terrible screech emanating from the gearbox. Crawling for the last couple of miles we pull into our 'usual garage'. The mechanic, beside himself with mirth, informs us that the clutch is gone, and 'what can you expect for £1,300 - perfection?'

By this time we are more than a little out of sorts, and following a blistering telephone call to the agent we arranged to leave the car to their tender mercies, at the same time hiring a car for £12-10-0d per week. Last Monday we collected our car.

End of saga? Not on your life.

Last evening we are tailed by a mysterious Austin 1100 which keeps flashing its headlights. We put our foot down on the accelerator - obviously it's either an irate customer whose roof has just collapsed *Michael is in the building trade djt*, or an official from the Customs and Excise about our recent consignment of AH games. But the flashing continues, plus a sequence of hand signals and facial contortions. Curiosity overcoming our fear of impending doom, we pull into the side of the road and stop. 'Do you realise that your exhaust is falling off?' We turn a dark shade of pink and mutter something about the car having just been serviced etc. etc. We crawl under the rear end. Yes. One good bump and the whole thing will clatter to the ground. We manage to get the vehicle to 20 Moray Close. So this morning we remove the offending part. It is completely rusted away! Remember that the car has done 7,400 miles and is not yet a year old.

The above story is intended as a warning to all those who might be considering the purchase of a British car. I realise that ALBION is a wargaming magazine, but surely we have a duty to protect the interests of our members? They should be warned without delay to think again about that new Aston Martin they ordered for delivery in 1975.

All the best, Michael.

Sorry to hear of the misfortunes, Michael. My car has had a similar history, although I must confess that all my troubles were spaced out over the years, not all coming at once. Margaret drives an Alfa Romeo, which has so far given very little trouble. However she had to have a replacement exhaust recently (the car, not Margaret, though it's a thought); it was with horror that we discovered that there isn't a join on an Alfa exhaust - the whole thing is in one piece. It therefore costs a helluva lot to replace. Oh Misery! djt

That seems to conclude the letters, apart from one which will appear, in part, later this issue in connection with another matter.

In the meantime, here are some comments about ALBION from questionnaires which have been returned. I am grateful to everyone who has returned the questionnaire from issue 21 - recent returns being from Henry Radice, David Jones, John Lilley, Richard Redd, Fred Davis, Sheila Minion, Bob McLaughlin and Bob Johnson. Here are a few of the printable comments.

'Am renewing my sub to encourage your efforts to broaden the scope of ALBION - I find it more absorbing every issue'. John Lilley.

'The entry on the subscriber list. I'll take your word for it - I still can't convert dollars to pounds'. Richard Redd.

'Not one rude remark. I think it is a grand way to keep you occupied.

Seriously, it is a splendid contribution to wargaming and to AHKS in particular. Keep up the good work'. Bob McLaughlin.

'I saw that someone else in England was trying to get a pbm Dippy game going in the Isles - have you been in contact with him?

You got to page 23 by rambling on and on and on & o &I sent all my copies to a psychiatrist who is doing a study on compulsiveness. Imagine wasting all that time typing out drivel then making copies of it and charging for it!. 41 subscribers - ah the joys of publishing. Within 6 months everyone will be struck dumb except the GREAT FECUND MINDLESS ONE -- to wit djt'.

Fecund means prolific, I recall. Hope the writer of these comments, one Bob Johnson, refers to ALBION, not my family..... djt

Bob raises the question about another postal Diplomacy magazine in England. I first heard that this was in the wind from that mine of information Don Miller. Since then I have been in touch with Peter Roberts and David Berg, who have been undertaking the main work behind the venture.

I sent them both copies of ALBION, just to show them what could happen if you lose all control. Dave obviously hasn't yet recovered from the shock, but Peter replied recently.

'ALBION is an entertaining magazine, but I don't think either Dave or I have the time or interest to put out anything quite so large....Diplomacy is played up here at Keele. There are between a dozen and twenty people up here who can play, so we're usually able to get a game together over weekends. But then, there isn't much to do in the Potteries anyway....

I'd like to sub to ALBION, but haven't really the money. We might trade..... Cheers, Peter Roberts.'

It seems as if we might have found quite a large group of potential players here - I should have thought that universities were the right sort of breeding grounds for Diplomacy players. However impoverished students on minimal grants perhaps find ALBION quite an expensive proposition - it's not just the magazine but the game fees, cost of postages etc. Hence it may be that we don't get a rush of new players from this source.

I will be sending Peter a few sample copies of this issue of ALBION, plus the recent COURIER, for his group to have a look at. If any of them are reading psychology, they might find sufficient material for a doctorate thesis on insanity. I also extend an open invitation to any of the group to take part in Diplomacy games in ALBION (strictly speaking, in COURIER), and hope that perhaps a few of them will give us a try. Similarly, David Berg will get a few copies to send to his postal players. However, the trade situation is still impossible, as far as I am concerned - I just can't afford it. I won't be trading with any new magazine for some considerable time, at this rate.

A BRITISH IDIOT IN AMERICA.

Being the totally biased and inaccurate account of the three-week holiday in the U.S.A. made by the editor, his wife and four-year-old son.

Part iii. Buffalo.

Starring: Omar and Sue DeWitt.

Guest Stars: Mac and Sally.

Terry and Sue.

Lestrade.

DeWitt SuperBlue.

Also appearing: Tourists at Niagara Falls.

The British Crown Jewels.

Yet another Suspicious Bank Official.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

We took our leave of Bob and Carol on Monday July 20th. Bob kindly drove us to La Guardia airport, Carol having to go back to work (a habit which, even in the modern society of the United States, they haven't yet been able to do away with). The car was piled high with our baggage, which now included a large and unwieldy basketball game, bought for Christopher. I carried my camera into the airport building, leaving Bob to park the car, carry all the luggage $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the car park, buy us coffee and take Christopher for his usual inconvenient visit.

In England, if you have to catch a plane, you join a queue and check in when your turn comes. Not in American airports - you have to push and jostle your way to the front of the queue, breaking arms, legs and necks in the process (not your own, for preference) and shout loudly and persistently to gain the attention of the bored official who checks you in. If you don't resort to this, you are likely to be still there when the plane has gone.

We said our thanks and goodbyes to Bob and boarded the Astrojet, settling down comfortably for the flight. They served cocktails (they do this, and charge high prices, before the plane has made any attempt to move).

Suddenly the voice of the captain drowned the gurgles. He said that the plane had developed some mysterious malady of the undercarriage, and that we had to pause for repairs. I'll bet it was painful - my heart went out for the poor thing, while thanking my lucky stars for the fact that my own undercarriage was in perfect working order. The delay would be very short, he assured us, and we were towed away from the main airport area and set out across a vast expanse of grass towards some buildings vaguely to be seen in the distance. He said these were hangers.

I knew better. I know a hijacking when I see one. I slumped back into my seat, wondering how I could somehow get round that 'women and children first' business, and amusing myself by watching planes, going in all directions, miss each other by inches on the main runways.

Anyway, I thought, this plane hasn't got much fuel on board, so we can't go much further than Alaska. I reckoned we stood a good chance of ending up at least in the right continent.

They served us more cocktails, as a feint. However the price made most people refuse. Except Margaret and Christopher.

A clank from outside made Margaret look out of the window. I finished her cocktail. She said the repair truck was moving away, and soon I found that they had been repairing the wheel, after all. We queued $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours for take-

off, then gathered up our wings and sped in the direction of Buffalo. Our arrival in New York had been a wet one. We discovered that this was to be a regular feature of our arrival anywhere. After three days of glorious sun, it suddenly threw the lot down, just when we were coming in to land at Buffalo. The captain landed by memory - certainly you couldn't actually see anything - and put the plane down without a bump, much to his credit. American passengers are, however, totally unlike English ones. In England, if a plane lands with a mere wing and three wheels broken, they give the fellow a clap just to show their hearts are in the right place. In America, a man is paid for doing a job, and the only time the pilot of an aircraft would be reminded of the assembled company behind him would be when they lynch him for running over a stone on the runway.

Our superb smooth landing at Buffalo was therefore greeted with a stony bored silence, and everyone rushed to the door, in defiance of all regulations, to be the first off.

We were last, naturally, Christopher having paused a) to obey the calls of nature and b) to flirt with the stewardess, a thing his dad has never been able to get away with. Omar and Sue DeWitt met us, gazed in blank astonishment at our luggage, and loaded us into the car.

Not let me draw to your attention a feature of house design which we, in England, sadly lack nowadays - the basement. This item is, I assure you, of paramount importance for the wargamer. Omar paused briefly to tell Margaret which was our room, then escorted me to the DeWitt basement.

What a sight met my eyes! A room, perhaps 24' by 16', beautifully panelled. And Games. Games of all shapes, sizes and types. A large playing table in the centre, filing cabinets, typewriters, map boards hung on the walls and, in a cupboard in the corner, yet more games. Truly a sight which is second to none in wargaming circles!

I gazed round in astonishment - I never knew so many games existed. Omar, seeing my attention was distracted, casually turned a Battle of Britain board to face the wall. I learned that this was the game in which we were currently involved; despite protests, bribes etc. he never let me see the dispositions of his forces.

We settled down immediately to ANZIO III. I, as Allies, invaded Terracina, and soon we were engrossed in the game, deaf to the protests from the ladies above. Between moves, I looked at the pile of 'nut mail' which Omar answers for Avalon Hill; how he manages to remain sane, and polite in his answers, I will never know - some of the questions were so puerile as to make me think again about this 'Twelve Years and Up' business.

Finally, we were persuaded to pack the game away for the time being, and ate and drank our fill in the lovely DeWitt house. We were introduced, at long range, to two Siamese cats. Lestrade (female, as it turned out) and SuperBlue looked us over with disdain, then retired haughtily, scorning our advances in best pussy language, to their home in the basement, where they knew the company would be sane. (I forgot to mention that the basement is only half taken up with games - Sue has a laundry there, the cats have their home, and Omar has a pistol range).

We packed Christopher off to bed - not a difficult job, as it turned out, since he still wasn't on top form, and had difficulty keeping food down. Then we settled down to a game of Broker (stock market orientated, obviously). In direct contradiction to the laws of hospitality, Omar refused to let me win, and bankrupted the Turnbulls with consummate ease. He had played before.

I was up bright and early the next day. I crept downstairs, tripping over everything possible, got out my special spying camera (Battle of Britain, for the use of) and sneaked into the basement. It was then that I discovered the thwarting of my plans. Omar, instead of lying peacefully in bed, was standing guard over the Battle of Britain board. My espionage had blown a fuse, but I carried off the situation as nonchalantly as possible (when you are in your nightwear, carrying a torch - broken - and a camera, it's difficult to be very nonchalant, but I made a stab at it). Omar pretended not to notice, but couldn't quite hide a smile.

We settled down to Anzio, and I immediately rolled two 1s, both at 1-2 odds. Omar's smile vanished. He went to the cupboard and reappeared with fifteen dice of different colours.

We battled away for a time, then drove to Omar's bank. For some time I had been sending Omar copies of Purnell's History of World War II, and my credit, under the DeWitt Easy Payment Plan, stood quite high. Omar paid up bravely. I thought this would avoid the necessity of trying to change more travellers' cheques for a while, but reckoned without Margaret. We picked up the girls and drove to downtown Buffalo, stopping on the way to take Christopher to the doctor's.

To date I have recounted the history of Christopher and his frequent visits to the smallest room. However, at this point, Omar and I were caught in much the same predicament. Omar solved the problem by suggesting a visit to the Buffalo Library, and we strolled there, at a run, pretending to be learned dignitaries discussing Plato, Ptolemy and Tolstoy. We had a pterrible ptime, but made it eventually. And you can stroll at a run, under the right circumstances. With practice.

I bought some books and Margaret added more to her pile of loot. We played Anzio until dinner, when two friends of the DeWitts, Mac and Sally, came round to inspect the strange English.

Mac asked me about schoolteachers' salaries in England, and fell about in fits of laughter when I told him. He just didn't believe it. When he told me what I could earn doing the same job over there, I didn't believe that I was actually an English schoolteacher either.

After dinner we played a yacht race game. Now, it is well-known that every English gentleman has the sea in his blood - in some cases you can see where it gets in. I therefore scuttled my binnacles, spliced the scuppers, and went into a commanding lead. Omar followed in second place, Sue fighting for third with Mac and Sally, and Margaret, who had got her f'c's'l'e entangled with her sextant, wandering around the ocean at the end of the line.

You are thinking that I won, of course. You would think my excellent seamanship enabled the triumphant Englishman to cross the line fathoms in front of the rest. However it was not to be. Omar revealed some very remarkable techniques of Diplomacy, and persuaded everyone to change the wind so I would get in trouble with my close-hauling (or cross-reaching). Eventually it came about that Omar was hist by his own petard, changed the wind once too often, and had to stand by, becalmed, while Sue, playing it crafty as is the habit of the DeWitts, steamed in to win by a very large margin, leaving me a poor third behind Sally. It is my private belief that Sue had, unknown to everyone else, attached a 5,000 h.p. diesel to her yacht. But the DeWitts keep their secrets well.

Christopher seemed recovered next day, when we set off for Niagara Falls. We crossed the Canadian border at Peace Bridge, being held up by the customs while they searched the car for drugs.

Niagara Falls is spectacular, of course. Everyone has seen pictures of the falls, so that comes as no surprise. But you have to see the speed with which the water travels, just at the top of the falls, before you really appreciate the tremendous size of it all. We were glad of the firm rails over which tourists were leaning at perilous angles, trying to get the falls and Auntie Agnes in the same shot. I gather that, when the right atmospheric conditions prevail, there is a spectacular rainbow over the falls. However it wasn't there for us. Omar remarked, cynically, that you had to put a quarter in the machine.

We saw two rather remarkable sights at Niagara Falls. First thing we saw, on arrival, was a placard advertising a display of the British Crown Jewels. Later we saw a London bus, apparently on its way to Hammersmith. We were rather taken aback by these sights, then remembered where London Bridge ended up.....

We lunched on the American side of the falls, in a restaurant with a panoramic view. During the meal, Christopher suddenly announced that he felt sick. Omar and I immediately broke the world record for the Sitting Long Jump, while Margaret, moving with the speed born of long practice, whipped out a box of paper tissues, in preparation for the tragedy to come.

Christopher burst into cackles of laughter. He was only joking, he explained, between bouts of hysteria. He thought it was a fine joke thus to fool three adults, and could he have a third dish of ice cream, please?

Eventually Margaret persuaded Omar and I that it was a false alarm, and we returned to the table, where Christopher chortled at us in delight.

I need hardly announce that Christopher had got his sense of humour back, and was therefore fit again. We resigned ourselves for the inevitable chaos that was certain to ensue.

We bought a hat labelled NIAGARA FALLS in large letters, just to distinguish ourselves from the tourists, and returned to Buffalo, to the golf game, to more Anzio and, eventually, to bed.

Margaret dragged us out to the shops the next morning, and we bought another suitcase to add to our magnificent collection. I had to cash another travellers' cheque, and made it at only the second bank we tried. Apparently you have to go to a bank which has a Foreign Department, if you are carrying travellers' cheques in sterling rather than dollars.

In the afternoon we went to see some more friends of Omar and Sue - two school-teachers who were renovating a farm near Buffalo. We drove out through pleasant countryside - very like the southern counties of England.

Terry and Sue have a really zany sense of humour. We were greeted by two apparent hayseeds, traditionally garbed in soft hats, overalls and hay forks. They spoke glowingly of the way the American Government paid them money for not planting corn, and showed us the pigs and horses. Sue is an accomplished equestrian, and carries off prizes all over the state.

Omar had brought his pistol, and Terry, Omar and I demonstrated to each other just what bad shots we were, to the alarm and apprehension of all animals in a wide radius. I carefully bored holes of a suitable size through an ace of spades, then cunningly presented it as my work. My actual shooting betrayed the secret, but it was a brief moment of triumph.

Terry then forged Christopher a horseshoe, with his initials and the date, and Sue let him ride one of her horses. This thrilled him enormously, and the horseshoe is proudly displayed, at this moment, in Christopher's bedroom. We spent a really enjoyable afternoon with Terry and Sue, getting under their feet and impeding their progress at the renovation. Eventually we had to take our leave, with much regret.

We drove back to Wickham Drive for more Anzio and dinner. In the course of conversation after dinner, I picked up a red cube, specially placed on the table at my side by Omar. It immediately fell apart, revealing itself to be a sort of puzzle, consisting of parts of different shapes and sizes which, when correctly assembled, formed a cube.

I wrestled with it for an hour, and managed to make the Forth Bridge, the Empire State Building, an Alsatian dog, a bookcase, a model of the Spanish Steps and a reasonable facsimile of Malcolm Wataon. But no cube.

Margaret took it off me and assembled the thing in $23\frac{1}{2}$ seconds flat. I wondered just what did constitute grounds for divorce, and whether we could get to Reno fairly quickly from Buffalo. Omar compounded my discomfort by producing the rulebook for the puzzle, in which it quoted about forty-three different ways of assembling the thing correctly.

I sent Margaret upstairs to do the packing.

We were sorry to have to re-pack the bags (plus the extra one) for the trip to Washington the next day. Our time with Omar and Sue had seemed all too short. I had failed to give Omar a hand with cutting the lawn, for a start, and he had plans for painting the house. And the Anzio game had to be left half-finished. Omar said it was a draw in my favour, being polite.

We stayed up late playing gramophone records and talking about this and that. Then to bed, for the last time in Williamsville.

To compare New York City with Buffalo is rather like comparing London with, say, Oxford. The main difference is one of tempo - in New York the overall atmosphere was one of hustle and bustle - in Buffalo (particularly in the area where Omar and Sue live) it was one of tranquillity and relaxation.

Omar and Sue, like Bob and Carol, were magnificent hosts, of course. I won't embarrass them by going into details, but suffice it to say that nothing was too much trouble for them. We owe them, and their friends, our sincere thanks for making us feel so at home.

In part iv of the series, next time, you will meet yet more characters, and hear even more proof of the extreme stupidity of the editor. For instance:-

BRIGAND WITH EYE-PATCH AT WASHINGTON! THE MILLER GAMES COLLECTION!

I GET THRASHED AT CRICKET BY AN AMERICAN!

WE BLOW ALL THE FUSES IN WASHINGTON! AN AMERICAN ICE-CREAM PARLOUR!

plus more.

* * * * *

ALBION Trades and Subscribers List.

Addition:-

42. Simon Garrett, Bathwick House, Bath BA2 6NX, Somerset.
S. (-2/5d).

Amendment:-

34. Bob McLaughlin. S. Receives ALBION by airmail.

We promised an article by Malcolm Watson on the recently-concluded Diplomacy game ALBION 69/1. However this isn't ready for printing yet, so will have to wait until the next issue.

In the meantime, here is a supply centre chart for the game, as requested by a number of readers.

Table shows the number of supply centres controlled at the start of the year at the head of the column.

	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910.
Austria	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	3
England	3	3	1	1	1	OUT	.	.	.
France	5	6	8	8	8	10	13	14	15
Germany	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	5
Italy	4	4	3	4	3	2	OUT	.	.
Russia	6	7	8	7	7	6	6	5	4
Turkey	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	7

Final Supply Centre Control:-

Austria - 2. England out. France - 18 (wins). Germany - 2. Italy out.
Russia - 3. Turkey - 9.

Finally, A GRAND REVELATION!

Ever since ALBION first hit the news, we have been making rude remarks about one particular reader, one Malcolm Watson. We have commented principally on his devotion to Scotland; he has, himself, praised the country in these pages, while other readers have either supported him (one or two) or invented strange Scots poems, and other things, about him.

Did you realise, however, that this has all been a pointless expenditure of energy? Do you realise that Malcolm, in addition to all his other qualities, is also guilty of underhand skullduggery?

Our reliable reporter now reveals all:-

MALCOLM WATSON IS NOT REALLY A SCOTSMAN!!!!!!

We grant the fact that he was born north of the border. We grant the fact that his kilt is a truly magnificent sight. We even grant his knobbly knees (a typical characteristic of the race) and the permanently-attached haggis. Nevertheless the fact remains that Malcolm's mother is not Scottish! Not only that, she is English, and from the South to boot.

You can rely on ALBION to bring you the news, the right news, the up-to-date news. We welcome comments from our readers on this latest revelation.

And that appears to tie it up for this time. Hope you've had good reading.

Don Turnbull, 6 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire, England.

November 1970.

Enclosed with this bulletin you will find a copy of the latest Kommandeur. Sections of the bulletin refer to questions asked in the K about the format of the Society, the possible need for change etc. Members are asked to let me have their views on these matters.

No new members this month - we don't expect new recruits at the end of a year since the subscription makes it worth their while to wait the odd month or two. However I already know of three wargamers who intend to join us in 1971, so be sure to have time available for another game assignment!

The Kommandeur Vol. 5 No. 3.

Bob Johnson is to be congratulated on the latest K - apart from anything else, he breaks new ground by including a new game. The British Region is again well represented, with three articles.

Please note that Bob is asking for the views of members on a number of items. These can be sent either direct to Bob or to me for compilation and forwarding. I hope we might get some opportunity for discussing the matters in open forum at the regional meeting, which will save time and allow members to express their views in an informal manner.

The important matters are:-

1). The possible appointment of a new President and a new ICRK-Meister. I know that Dick Holcombe finds it difficult to work for the Society nowadays; this is regrettable, since Dick did a lot of valuable work for AHIKS at a time when it was sorely needed, and we are grateful for this. Bob McLaughlin has already done over a year's service as icrk-meister (you tend to go crazy after a short time in this job) and will probably have to hand over the reins to someone else soon. Any nominations? Please note that David Wood will be continuing his task of icrk-meister for the British Region - he didn't know that this appointment was for life.....

2). The proposal that we should change the name of the Society. Personally I tend to oppose this. We have already spent quite a lot of cash on letterheads etc., and these would go to waste were the name changed. But, more important, all the advertising material currently on display to the public refers to AHIKS, and it would be expensive and messy to have to replace this. Finally, everyone who joins AHIKS (I think) has heard about the Society via Avalon Hill games - why, then, remove the AH reference?

The matter is discussed in the K on page 3. While I agree with Dave Bell in the desire to remove reference to 'War' in the title, it seems to me that this is only paying lip service to some vague public image. And after all, we are not aiming at the public anyway.

Please let me have your views, or send them to Bob direct.

The Kommandeur - Back Issues.

Every member should have the following issues of the K:-

Volume 3 Nos. 1 and 2 (no others issued).

Volume 4 Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Volume 5 Nos. 1, 2, 3.

If you are missing any of these, please let me know. I have a stock of most back issues. Vol. 3 No. 1 is particularly important, since it contains a number of game rulings adopted by the Society. At some time in the future we hope to print the introductory booklet (Colin Bonner's suggestion in the last bulletin) which will contain all AHIKS rulings.

The Colonel's Corner.

Subject to Don's typing fingers and space limitations, this should be the last 'sand in your hair' corner. Continuing with lesser known works:

A FULL LIFE by Lt.Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks. Collins 25/-. 1960.

General Horrocks was one of Monty's Men, being brought out to the desert in 1942 to command 13 Corps. As one might expect, his autobiography is very entertaining, extremely easy reading but interspersed with what one reviewer described as 'nuggets of military wisdom'. Strongly recommended.

APPROACH TO BATTLE. A COMMENTARY. EIGHTH ARMY NOVEMBER 1941-MAY 1943 by Lt. Gen. Sir Francis Tuker. Cassell. 50/-. 1963.

Gen. Tuker, who commanded the famous 4th Indian Division, is an erudite soldier and has written several books. Anything written by him is worth reading.

This book is an analysis of military principles with detailed tactical accounts and personal reminiscence. The author keeps off personalities and deals with doctrine, training and equipment. He is highly critical of all three. Up to August 1942 he does not present anything very new, but on the later stages of the campaign - the MONTY phase - he sheds new light. A most interesting and stimulating book.

BATTLE FOR EGYPT. THE SUMMER OF 1942 by Lt. Col. J.L.Scouller. Oxford. 1956. Part of the Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War, the book describes the actions of the 2nd New Zealand Division in 1942 up to the arrival of Alexander and Montgomery. It is a good production with good sketch maps. The description of events is detailed, but there is rather too much commentary, most of it critical of the higher command and armoured formations. Nobody has ever denied the tremendous fighting qualities of the Division; its spectacular breakout from Mersa Matruh and its fighting the enemy to a standstill at El Alemein are known to all, but it is a pity that blame for its failures (for example the night attack on Ruweisat Ridge in July 1942) are always put on others. It is good to read other Dominion's, Allies' and the enemy's account of campaigns, and this is good reading. Recommended for library reading if you can get hold of it.

AGAINST GREAT ODDS by Brigadier C.N.Barclay. Sifton Praed. 15/- 1956.

Brig. Barclay is a well known military writer and in this book provides a fine 'filler-in' of detail, not included in the Official History's narrative of our first military victory of World War II i.e. Wavell's offensive in the Western Desert 1940-41. We are apt to forget about this classic and brilliant campaign partly because its gains were so quickly lost and it was later submerged in the clash of arms and drama of events in the desert. It was, however, a model campaign and is worth studying. The author has been lucky enough to quote from Gen. O'Connor's personal narrative. The book gives the detailed composition of the forces, equipment etc., including the complete British ORBAT. He describes the planning, problems, course of battle and finishes with the situation after victory and retrospective comment. Recommended. Fair sketch maps are included.

THE DESERT RATS by Maj.-Gen. L.G.Verney. 1954. I know nothing of this book but it may be of interest.

AFRICAN ASSIGNMENT by Gen. Sir Francis de Guingand. Hodder and Staughton.

21/-. 1953. Any book by this author is probably well worth reading.

ALEXANDER OF TUNIS by Norman Hillson. W.H.Allen. 18/-. 1952.

A biographical portrait. It is remarkable how little has been written on the man, whom I believe was our finest, and certainly most unassuming, general in the Second World War.

Bulletin 19 Page 3.

Finally, I end this, by no meane complete, seriee on the desert with a reference to its most glamorous and legendary character - Rommel. I shall return to this theatre for brief forays as and when new books are published, or I come across other literature, and as space allows.

ROMMEL'S LAST VICTORY: THE BATTLE OF THE KASSERINE PASS by Martin Blumeneon, Allen & Unwin 42/- 1958.

An uneven book which deals with a comparatively unknown battle of the Tunisian campaign, Rommel withdrawing to the Mareth Line, suddenly turning westwards against the raw American troops who collapsed before him. The position was stabilised later and restored by February 1943. The battle was a muddle on both sides - Rommel was unwell, von Arnim vacillated, the Americans were bedevilled by faulty command organisation and personal antipathies; as a result they took a bloody nose - and learned a lot!

Henry Radice.

Opponents Wanted.

Michael Nethercot and Ken Norris are both interested in multi-commander games, arising from Michael's article in ALBION recently, and the challenge from the Western Region. This does not give us a large enough team to accept the challenge, but I will keep this list going and add to it as players express their interest.

David Chaitin wants an opponent for either D Day or Waterloo. He might be persuaded to play Anzio and/or AK also, if you ask him. Doar Na Negev, K'utzat Urim, Israel. Damn - got that the wrong way round - reverse the first two parts.

When people over here get their copies of S&T 22, and get TAC14 set up, I would like to try a postal version of this game. One of the simpler scenarios first, I think. Please keep this one in mind.

A Rule Interpretation.

Recently I had cause to question Omar on a ruling arising out of a Bulge game. The question at that time concerned the US 14th Armd. Cav. - is this pure armour, in the sense that it can withdraw from engagements?

Omar's reply, which I give below, not only affects this particular unit, but also throws light on another, more general, rule concerning zones of control. '14th armoured cavalry is not pure armour; thus it cannot withdraw from engagements.'

'In Bulge, or any game with zones of control, a unit may move from one ZOC direct to another as long as (while doing so) it has not moved THROUGH the zone of control of some enemy unit. A unit cannot move from one square in the zoc of a unit directly into another square in the zoc of the same unit.'

A number of points arise from this. First, when Omar says 'any game with zones of control' he must mean games in which the zones of control affect combat as well as movement. Some of the Test Series Games, for instance, have zones of control, but allow movement through them, and usually at a movement penalty, without forcing combat.

Looking through the rules of some AH games for this situation, I see that, in Afrika Korps, one can move from the zoc of an enemy unit directly into the zoc of another enemy unit, providing the two don't overlap on the square to which one is moving. See the rulesheet page 3 section 8 under multiple unit battles and the battle manual page 10.

Bulletin 19 Page 4.

In Stalingrad the same ruling applies - in fact I think the diagram in the battle manual is the same as the one for AK.

In Bulge we have the same ruling, but no diagram. And in Blitz. In Anzio the wording has changed, and there doesn't seem to be a diagram to clarify.

It just shows what happens if you don't check rulings carefully and regularly. For some time now I have been playing a ruling which doesn't allow movement from one enemy zoc to another, whether these zones belong to the same unit or not. Obviously I have been wrong.

Just to repeat the correct ruling, for the records: 'If a unit starts its movement in an enemy zone of control, it may not move direct into the zone of control of the same enemy unit, although it may move direct into the zone of control of another enemy unit, providing the two are mutually exclusive.'

Thanks, Omar, for this valuable clarification. I wonder just how many people have been making the same mistake as I have.....

The situation still isn't clear on Anzio, however. Perhaps Omar would give his ruling on this game, if it is any different.

A Fact Of Life.

One of these days I will get sorted out on the production of this bulletin. If I leave everything until the last minute, the information is accurate but you get it late (where's my blonde general duties secretary???). If I try to get organised, and start typing early, you can rest assured that, by the time I get half-way through, some information is out of date, some wrong, etc. This time I have fallen into trap number 2, as the next two headings will show.

NEW MEMBER.

Cancel previous references! We are happy to welcome a new member this month, despite my announcement that there wasn't one!

Simon Garrett sent me his application form after I started typing this bulletin, thereby rendering my editorial plans null and void. However, everyone has to suffer my incompetence at least once during their membership - in Simon's case he just happens to have got his share rather early.

Anyway, the region extends its welcome to you, Simon. Hope you enjoy your membership, the games etc.

Simon can be contacted at the following address:

S.J.Garrett,
Bathwick House,
Bath BA2 6NX,
Somerset.

He owns AK, Stalingrad, Waterloo, D Day, Anzio, Bulge and Blitz. For a start he would like to try AK, Stalingrad or Waterloo, so please regard this as an addition to the 'opponents wanted' column. He says he wouldn't mind two opponents, for different games, at this stage, so please contact him (and David Wood, to arrange ircs).

Multicommander and Monitored Games.

You may recall that Glen Hertz, 622 Pine Street, Owosso, Michigan 48867, is in charge of the AHKS committee relating to this category of game. He sent me the following letter recently.

'Nine persons have written me requesting to play in, or monitor, a MC&M game. I've managed to get one game started (Midway), but the difficulty, right now, is lack of interested parties.

'To sort of spur things on, I'm planning a multi-commander Stalingrad II game. It's basically the game from S&T plus Finland. The board measures 8' by 6' (yes, it's rather large!). I've got the board almost complete. The rules, 8½x11 sheets to construct the board, counters etc. can be obtained for \$7.50 from George Phillips, 510a Ashdowne House, 305 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

'I've been observing one game which is now in progress, published in 'Barbarossa Bulletin' by Paul Jameson, 251 Oakland Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15213. He charges \$3.50 for a subscription - I don't happen to know the duration of the subscription. I'll be publishing my own bulletin for the game I will be starting (I hope in December).

Glen Hertz.'

Please communicate with Glen if you are interested.

In this context, Ian Erskine recently sent me a photo of a large Stalingrad board he has made up (I think it was the S&T Stalingrad board - right, Ian?). It is quite enormous - some people avoid gardening by covering the garden with tarmac; others use Stalingrad boards! Ian was perhaps hoping that I could print this photograph in the bulletin, by the process which produced the photos of the last regional meeting. However, try as I might, I just can't get the detail to show up on the print, so I'm afraid you won't be seeing it. Ian is clearly already equipped for a multi-commander game if we can get one started in the region, or if he wishes to get involved with Glen's project.

Poultron Press - Strategy and Tactics - the Test Series Games.

Many of you have written to me recently asking what has happened to Poultron Press and the Turnbull agency. We seem to be back to square one at present - I have sent a large order to them (no less than 7 games, 12 back issues and 3 new subscriptions, plus the order for issue 22 for current subscribers). However I haven't heard anything from them for some considerable time. I can't guess at the reason for this - we seem to be giving them enough orders to make the thing viable, as far as the British are concerned, so I suppose something has gone wrong with the administration at that end. As I recall, issue 23 should be due for publication any time now - perhaps everything will come in a large parcel after publication.

However, rest assured, all you frustrated prospective purchasers, that I will do my utmost to get your order to you as soon as humanly possible. Your cash will remain with me until the order is filled, so there's no worry on that score.

The following new games should, by now, be available:- Strategy I, Stalingrad III, Battle of Britain Revision, Flying Tigers, Twelve O'clock High. Prices are uncertain as yet (as is everything in this regard at the moment).

I will be bringing my collection of coloured, mounted Test Series Games boards to the regional meeting, just to make you feel more frustrated.

You may like to read Eric Slack's letter in this ALBION, which refers to the matter. Considering the fact that Eric has been waiting longer than anyone else, this is a model of patience.

ADVERT FROM THE WOOD CLAY-THROWING MANUFACTURING ORGANISATION.

Is your wife a REAL wargames widow? Is she hall-marked in every link?? If not, you must buy her the ultimate sign of wargamer widowhood - the NEW HEXAGONAL AHIKS WEDDING RING. Please get your order in now, as the demand is likely to exceed the production rate.

Special offer - secret compartment for arsenic installed FREE to first ten.

Turnbull's Numeracy in doubt.

You may have noticed that the last bulletin you got was number 17. So was the one before that. Sorry! Being a maths teacher has its disadvantages.....

It's Happened Again!

We have YET ANOTHER NEW MEMBER! David Wood wrote to me this week to tell me that he has persuaded a friend of his, Ivor Moseley, to join AHIKS. At present I haven't got Ivor's address, nor a list of the games he owns. However he is attending the regional meeting this weekend, so all details will be cleared then, after he has bought all other members a drink

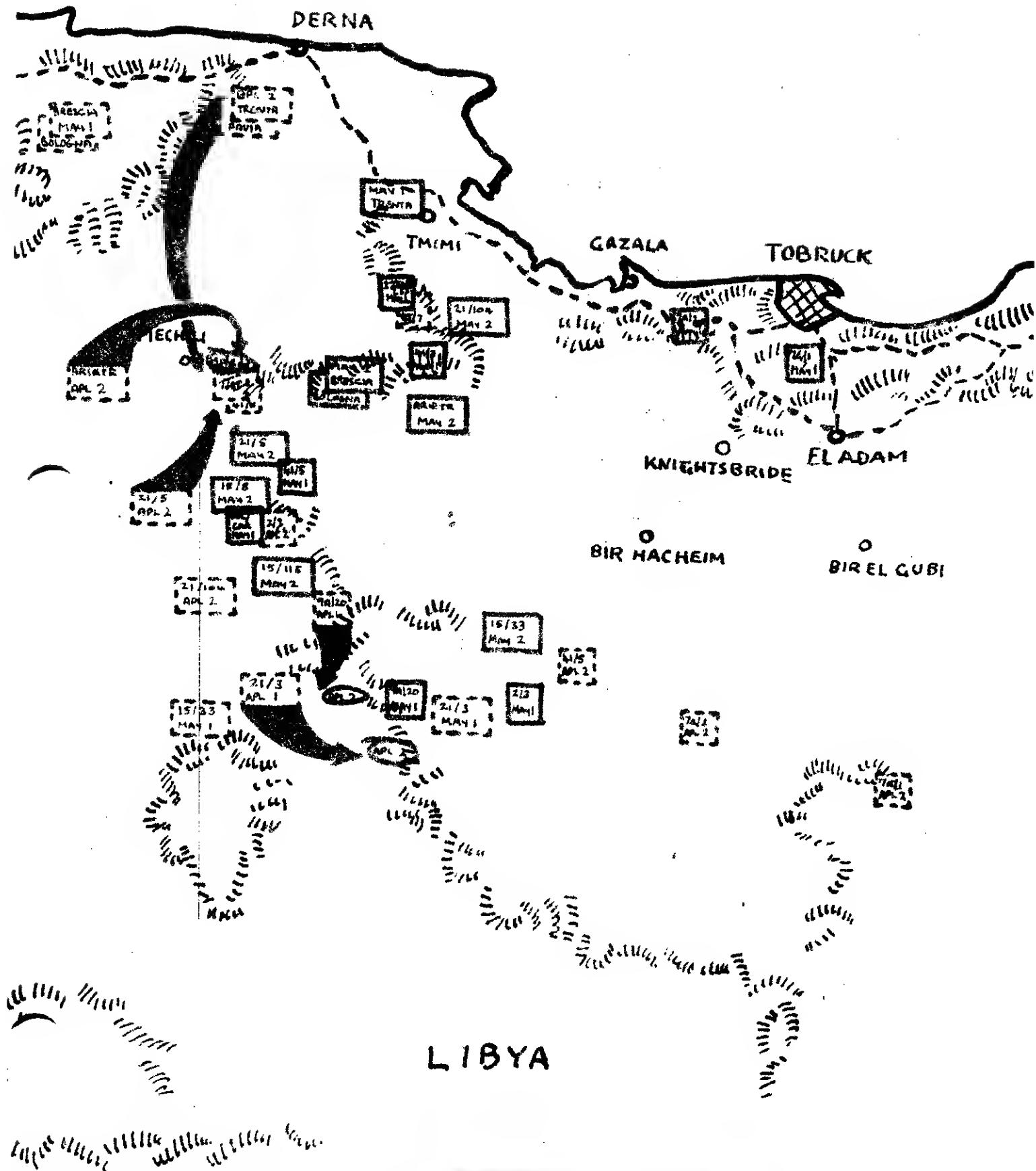
Afrika Korps Challenge - Malcolm Watson (British Region) v Frank Nau (Central).

After donning my well-worn khaki shorts and desert boota I set about implementing the master plan. Ariete, Pavia, Brescia, Trenta and Bologna moved up the coast road, cutting off Bengasi, whilst 21/5 and 21/104 took up position north of Msus waiting for a chance to pounce on any weak spot. 21/3 recce hightailed it for the westernmost tip of the U-shaped ridge directly east of Msus thus denying it to the British. Frank replied in classic style by defending the escarpment south-west of Tmimi with the 22Gds, that east of Mechili with the 7/31, and finally closed the vital gsp by placing 2/3 armd. on the ridge south-east of Mechili. 9A/20 dug in south-east of 2/3 to prevent a possible surround whilst the remainder of the British forces rushed to the scene by road and sea. Supplies are denied me in mid-April. Bologna and Trenta continue to lay siege to Bengasi; Brescia and Pavia take up positions west of Derna to guard the road. Ariete joins 21/5 and 21/104 in forming a cordon to prevent any British movement in front of the escarpment. 21/3 recce moves south onto the escarpment to force the British to guard against infiltration. Nothing grand is attempted until supplies and reinforcements are forthcoming. The British react to this threat by bringing units south from Tobruk, 41/7 joins the 22Gds whilst 41/11 reinforces 7/31. With great glee I see that the British have, in fact, weakened their position rather than strengthening it. Ariete and 21/5 surround 7/31 and 41/5. 41/5 is eliminated at 5-1 while Pavia soaks off against 7/31, and is lost. 7/31 is now in the unenviable position of trying to break out at 1-6 - an impossible task without aid. It also renders the escarpment positions untenable. 15/33 now joins 21/104 in forming a blockade against possible British counterattack. The plucky 21/3 now moves off the escarpment to the east to prevent 9A/20 from withdrawing, whilst 15/8 and 15/115 rush past Msus to get to grips with their British antagonists.

At this stage the British would have done well to accept the loss of their positions, the 7/31 and, possibly, the 9A/20. An orderly withdrawal towards Tobruk would have been prudent action. However the aggressive British commander decided to fight the 9A/20 out of trouble; he moved down the escarpment and attacked 21/3 with the aid of the 2/3 armd, which surrounded 21/3. This action resulted in the loss of 21/3; it also meant, however, that the British had only a thin screen of infantry between the main German force and Tobruk. 7A/1 and 7A/2 took up positions in the outskirts of Tobruk. Pol/Car, 41/5 and 41/7 moved into position to hold the pass formerly guarded by 2/3. 7/31 failed to break out of the trap and is eliminated. The screen formed by 41/5, 41/7 and Pol/Car was frail - so frail that they needn't have bothered.

The rest of Malcolm's account won't fit on the page, I'm afraid. Next time he can bring us up to date. In the meantime, my usual apologies for errors in this bulletin, and thanks to you all for your continued support. See you at the convention!

Don Turnbull.



END-PIECE

